

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 16694 071713Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 /078 W
-----002507 080850Z /21

R 071550Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5665

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 16694

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, IT
SUBJECT: VIEWS OF DEFENSE MINISTER RUFFINI ON CURRENT DOMESTIC
POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: ROME 16486

1. IN THE COURSE OF A MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR GARDNER
ON SEPTEMBER 4 REGARDING THE ITALIAN DEFENSE
BUDGET (REFTEL), DEFENSE MINISTER RUFFINI BRIEFLY
DISCUSSED THE CURRENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION.
RUFFINI SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE CURRENT EVOLUTION
OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY. THE PARTY WAS MOVING DECISIVELY
IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. HE HOPED THE NEW COURSE WHICH
PARTY SECRETARY CRAXI HAD INITIATED WOULD PROVE TO BE
PERMANENT. RUFFINI ADDED THAT HE EXPECTED SOCIALISTS
TO EMERGE FROM THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS AS THE LARGEST
POLITICAL GROUP IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. THIS
FACT WOULD ADD FURTHER LUSTER TO THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST
PARTY'S IMAGE AT HOME, HE BELIEVES.

2. RUFFINI SAID THAT HE DID NOT ANTICIPATE A NATIONAL
ELECTION IN ITALY UNTIL AFTER THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS.
HE HOPED THAT IN THE INTERVENING PERIOD CLEAR PROGRESS
WOULD BE MADE IN DEALING WITH SOME OF THE COUNTRY'S
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 16694 071713Z

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND THAT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WOULD
AS A RESULT BE IN A STRONGER POSITION TO GO INTO A
NATIONAL ELECTION. THE DEFENSE MINISTER FELT IT WAS
POSSIBLE THAT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND SOCIALISTS
WOULD EMERGE FROM THE NEXT NATIONAL ELECTION WITH A
ROUGH 60 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. HE THOUGHT THAT SUCH A
RESULT COULD GIVE THE SOCIALISTS SUFFICIENT CONFIDENCE

TO ENTER A COALITION WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS.

3. IN RUFFINI'S VIEW, THE COMMUNIST PARTY IS IN TROUBLE. AT THE GRASS ROOTS THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF FERMENT AND RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTY AND THE TRADE UNIONS ARE STRAINED. ASKED IF BERLINGUER IS UNDER PRESSURE TO ALTER THE PRESENT GOVERNING FORMULA, RUFFINI DOUBTED THAT THE COMMUNISTS INTEND TO CHANGE THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENT. THEY RECOGNIZE THAT IF THEY PUSH TOO HARD THEY COULD PROVOKE AN ELECTION, AN ELECTION IN WHICH THEY WOULD LOSE VOTES AS COMPARED WITH 1976. AS RUFFINI PUT IT, THE COMMUNISTS WENT INTO THE 1976 ELECTION "WITH THE WIND BEHIND THEM; NOW THE WIND HAS DIED DOWN." NOR WOULD THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE--GOING INTO THE OPPOSITION--APPEAL TO THEM. THIS IS A DIFFICULT MOMENT FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN TERMS OF PUBLIC SUPPORT, RUFFINI MAINTAINED, AND IT WOULD DO THE PARTY NO GOOD TO WITHDRAW FROM THE MAJORITY. IN ANY CASE, THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WOULD NOT PERMIT THE COMMUNISTS IN THE GOVERNMENT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES; THEY WOULD "NOT GIVE THE COMMUNISTS ONE MILLIMETER MORE". HOLMES

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME16694
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780365-1098
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780993/aaaacywc.tel
Line Count: 83
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 86fa6856-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ROME 16486
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1518320
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VIEWS OF DEFENSE MINISTER RUFFINI ON CURRENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION
TAGS: PGOV, IT, (RUFFINI, ATTILIO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/86fa6856-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014